NEW JERSEY

2000-2001
Guidelines and
Application

BEST

PRACTICES

The Best Practices application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page and page 2, if applicable.

Category	Special Education _(Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)_
Practice Name	Our Community Alphabet Tour
Number of Schools with Practice	1 _(If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)_

County	Burlington
District (Proper Name)	Lumberton Township
Address	30 Dimsdale Drive, PO Box 8
	Street/P O Box
	Lumberton, New Jersey 08048
	City Zip Code
Telephone	(609) 267-1406 Fax (609) 267-0002 Email lumberton.k12.nj.us
Chief School Administrator	Frank J. Logandro
Nominated School #1 (Proper Name)	Florence L. Walther School
Address	56 Chestnut Street PO Box 8
	Street P O Box
	Lumberton, New Jersey 08048
	City Zip Code
Telephone	(609) 267-1404 Fax (609) 267-1124 Email lumberton.k12.nj.us
Principal	John H. Baily
Program Developer(s)	Mrs. Hope Eisenberg and Mrs. Linda Reuter
Application Prepared By	Mrs. Hope Eisenberg and Mrs. Linda Reuter
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature	_[signature]_

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLY

Approved: ✓ Yes ____ No   County Superintendent's Signature _[signature]_

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION

Application Requirements: <u>Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.</u>

1. **RESPONSES to the information and the statements below must be ANONYMOUS and ACCURATE.** No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements

2. **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4.** Do <u>not</u> include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.

3. Application must be **keyboarded on 8 ½" x 11" white paper, portrait** format. **Twelve-point or larger computer font or fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font** must be used. (This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.)

4. **KEYBOARDED RESPONSES** to all the statements below must be **no more than a total of four pages. Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response.** Format your response for accuracy and clarity.

5. **The information on page 4 and the responses** to statements must be copied **on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable)** must be copied **on one side of the page.** Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.

6. **The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.**

7. **The original and seven copies of the application** must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by **November 27, 2000,** with the **Itemized List of District Applications** form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:

Type of School	Grade Levels	Practice Name <u>Our Community Alphabet Tour</u>
_X_ Elementary School	_2_	
___ Middle School		Number of Schools with Practice ___1___
___ Junior High School		Number of Districts with Practice ___1___
___ High School		Location __ Urban/City __ Suburban With Urban Charcteristics
___ Other: _____		_X_ Suburban __ Small City/Town __ Rural

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.

___ Arts (Visual and Performing Arts)	___ Educational Technology	___ Safe Learning Environment
___ Assessment/Evaluation	___ Gifted and Talented Programs	___ School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness
___ Bilingual Education and Diversity	___ Health and Physical Education	___ Science
___ Citizenship/Character Education	___ Language Arts Literacy	___ Social Studies
___ Early Childhood Education Programs	___ Mathematics	_X_ Special Education
___ Educational Support/Guidance and Counseling Programs	___ Professional Development	___ World Languages
	___ Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	

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1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards,** addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at http://www.state.nj.us/education.
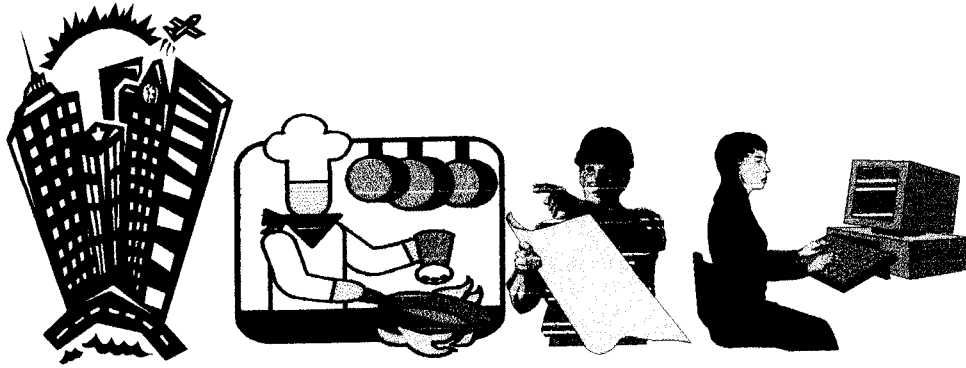
OUR COMMUNITY ALPHABET TOUR

"Our Community Alphabet Tour" is the culminating activity to a year-long interdisciplinary unit of study for 2nd grade students with multiple language and neurological disabilities. Using the alphabet as the structure, our students study places in their community. This structure reinforces letter recognition and phonemic awareness, as well as encompassing the 2nd grade social studies curriculum. Additionally, technology is advanced using the computer and digital camera to take pictures of the places we visit and to create a book of our experiences. The students use their writing skills to describe the pictures and recall the various community adventures. Computer software is used to generate a 3 dimensional model of a community. Map skills, math skills, and oral language skills are also integrated into our unit. We see this program as a natural progression from the kindergarten and 1st grade curricula in which the students learn about careers. In our program, our students identify various places in their community, then they recall the careers of the people who work in these places.

This interdisciplinary experience motivates students with educational and language-based differences to improve language skills, technology skills, social studies appreciation, cooperative communication, and workplace readiness. "Our Community Alphabet Tour" project helps our students achieve the following *objectives*:

1. Students use critical thinking skills to select a community place which begins with each letter of the alphabet.
2. Students are exposed to different work places in the community and to the jobs connected with these places.
3. Students use technology tools to practice language and computer keyboard skills.
4. Students organize words in 3 to 4 sentences about a community place and the related occupations.
5. Students reinforce oral and written language skills with their classmates throughout the whole unit.

6. Students are exposed to all the places discussed in our community and are personally involved with 3 or 4 community presentations on our community alphabet bus tour.

7. Students develop an appreciation for, and appropriate interaction with, parents and community volunteers.

While working throughout the year on this special project, our students practice language, technology skills, appreciate social studies, work and communicate cooperatively and learn about the community workplace. Additionally, critical thinking skills are used to determine places that are common to most communities, and those that are unique to their community. Special needs students require constant review and motivation to learn and integrate new information, therefore this project allows the time for learning to be achieved as well as providing a primary experience for those children who have difficulty generalizing and abstracting information. This project can easily be replicated by any first or second grade classroom teacher, but is particularly effective for those students needing constant review, reinforcement, and concrete experiences.

The second grade students who participate in this project are evaluated and classified as having multiple language and neurological deficits. Individualized Education Plans are developed for each child. The goals for all our children include language, critical thinking, and social communication skills. The IEP's are used as our guide to determine each child's ability to perform various tasks.

"Our Community Alphabet Tour" project combines the IEP goals and objectives for each child with the New Jersey Department of Education Core Curriculum Content and Cross Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Multiple learning modalities are employed, problem-solving and critical thinking skills are encouraged, and technology is advanced. Many Core Curriculum Standards are met as our students increase their awareness of the community environment. This project helps to prepare our students for *workplace readiness.*

Correlation with Cross Content Workplace Readiness Standards

A. **Standard 1** - Students develop career planning skills as they identify occupations relating to places in the community.

B. **Standard 2** - Students learn the use of the digital camera while refining computer keyboard skills to type sentences to create a Community Alphabet Tour book.

C. **Standard 3** - Students use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to identify places necessary in every community.

Correlation with Core Curriculum Content Standards

A. **Standard 1.2** - Students refine perceptual, intellectual, and technical skills in the creation of digital photographs and written sentences pertaining to the community.

B. Standard 1.2 - The final project, a book about our community, is an artistic product completed by the class.

C. Standard 1.6 - Design skills are developed as students create a computer generated, 3-dimensional community.

D. Standard 3.1 - Speaking skills are refined as students participate in dialogue about community needs, places, and occupations.

E. Standard 3.2 - Students will actively listen to presentations by workers about the history and necessity of various places in our community.

F. Standard 3.3 - Students are exposed to writing clear, concise language about their Community Alphabet Tour.

G. Standard 3.4 - Students will read various materials and texts with comprehension about the function of places in their community.

H. Standard 4.7 - All students will develop spatial sense and an ability to use geometric properties in the creation and design of their 3-dimensional community.

I. Standard 6.9 - Students will acquire geographical understanding by studying the environment through maps, the 3-dimensional community model, and the actual community alphabet tour.

Our year long project is a stimulating, interesting way to learn about the community and environment. The continuous reviewing, rephrasing, and entertaining variety of enrichment helps our students to overcome their academic and social challenges. Students' improvement and progress is documented by the increased proficiency of their oral language and writing skills. The extent to which the objectives are met is determined by using the following *assessment measures:*

Objective 1 - Students will use critical thinking skills to select a community place, one common to all communities or particular to their own, for each letter in the alphabet. Teacher observation and language therapist observation are used to assess auditory memory skills and the effort required by the students to select new places.

Objective 2 - Students will be exposed to a variety of places in the community. The completion of an alphabetized checklist, as places are observed on our tour, documents the accomplishment of this objective.

Objective 3 - Students' technology skills are advanced and evaluation is made by the creation of the 3-dimensional community model and the taking of digital photos to accompany the culminating book project.

Objective 4 - Students will organize oral language into complete sentences. Use of audio recordings will document the improvement of vocabulary and syntactical sentence structure for each child.

Objective 5 - Students will improve their oral and written language skills. Documentation of improvement is made through conferencing and rewriting of rough drafts pertaining to community places and their workers.

Objective 6 - Students will feel comfortable using oral language in front of others as a means of expression. In-class language sharing allows students to evaluate each other and themselves and gain confidence.

Objective 7 - Students will be exposed to a variety of community places and personnel. The interaction between students and the community workers, as well as the students' book about their experience, provides a final evaluation of their language progress.

This unique "Best Practice" achieves an enjoyable way to learn and retain information about community and community workers. We utilize the donation of a school bus for the day from the community bus company and a volunteer parent driver to complete "Our Community Alphabet Tour". Our students are motivated to use oral and written language to expand on this experience, along with technology to document through pictures, the events of this exciting day. This project helps our students learn about their community, as well as build ideas for their future in the workplace.